

# Church in Chile to Renounce Traditional Sources of Income

Santiago — (NC) — The Chilean Bishops' Conference has approved a plan by which the Church will renounce its traditional sources of income — lands, buildings and wealthy church-goers — and will rely on contributions from average parishioners.

The plan was set up by 24 diocesan directors of Church Contributions (CALI) and its purposes are:

- To make people aware of their obligation to support their Church on a voluntary, regular basis, by contributing at least 1% of their income.

- To organize and endow CALI at national and diocesan levels, so that it can provide services to the community in the raising and distribution of funds.

- To turn over all money matters to lay groups in parishes and dioceses, and give wide publicity to their regular financial statements.

- To hold in October 1970 a national meeting of all Church administrators, both from the secular clergy and the Religious congregations.

There is also a program under way to make religious services available without fee or at nominal cost and to eliminate all ostentatious weddings and funerals, which to many Catholics seem discriminatory against the poor.

Chile has a per capita income of \$385 annually.

Father Jose Kuhl, liaison man between the bishops and CALI, said that the new setup may amount to only 10 per cent of Church needs.

He said the change-over is following a gradual process of substitution.

"We cannot do it over night," the priest said. "We cannot liquidate 90% of our resources and remain with 10% without shrinking the range of action of the Church. But we are engaged in an aggressive campaign to increase contributions and get rid of the 'capitalistic' ways."

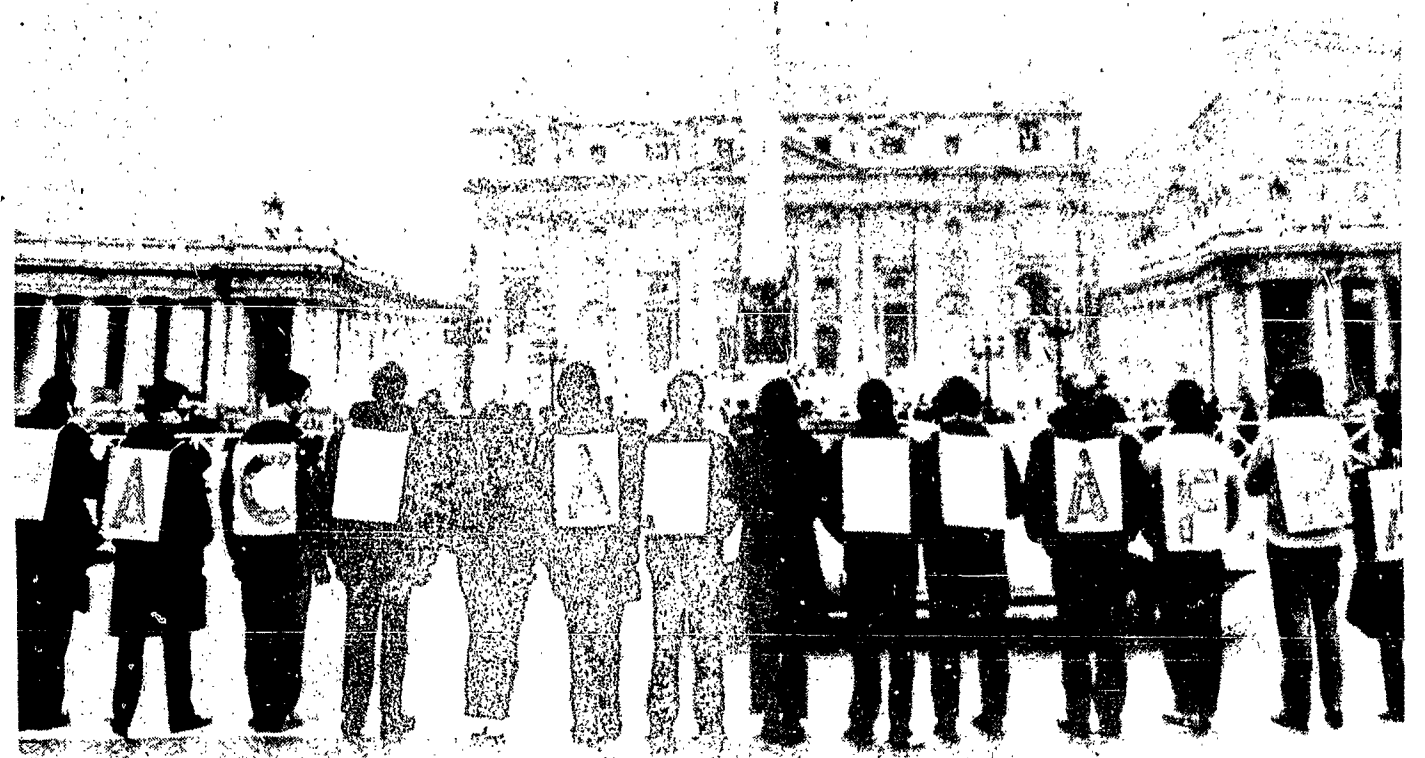
Orlando Sepulveda, a layman who runs CALI in Santiago, said that since 1966 many families have been contributing 1% and more to Church support.

"This is not quite the title which many Protestant churches require," he said. "Besides, this is not a question of mere almsgiving. Church needs do not mean altar candles and vestments. The Church is supporting schools, hospitals, homes for children and the aged."

"We must pay decent wages to our teachers and social workers," Sepulveda said.

"At any rate," he continued, "we are giving up all properties not used for strictly Church purposes, and whatever funds come from their sale will be invested in social works, such as the consumers cooperatives and the savings and loan associations."

The effort follows directives from the Second Vatican Council and from the Medellin guidelines of 1968, proposed by the second general assembly of the Latin American bishops held in that Colombian city. But before these could be implemented, Chilean Catholics participated in two local synods.



Peace for Biafra

Student demonstrators, each wearing a letter on his back, urge peace for Biafra in front of St. Peter's Basilica. Demonstration took place before end of the war.

## Paraguay:

### Bishop Defends Priests Engaged in Social Reform

Asuncion, Paraguay — (NC) — A leading Paraguayan bishop has defended priests engaged in social reform.

Theirs is not political action but "Gospel action," said Bishop Ramon Bogarin of San Juan de las Misiones. The bishop, a member of the permanent committee of the Paraguayan Bishops' Conference and a frequent critic of the government, added that conservatives often call these priests "Communists" merely because the conservatives dislike justice.

In the past six months, the regime of Gen. Alfredo Stroessner has harshly repressed several Catholic moves on behalf of political prisoners, social reform and civil freedoms. Catholic youths have been jailed, women and children manhandled, and two militant priests expelled. The government also shut down the Catholic weekly, *Comunidad*, for its editorials protesting what it called "persecu-

tion" of the Church in Paraguay.

"Conservatives generally brand as Marxist all activities showing indignation and dissent on the the unjust conditions of our society," Bishop Bogarin said, "no matter how justified and Christlike the protests are."

"Thus, many true Christians are called Communists, subversives, guerrillas, and the same fate awaits those who defend them," he added.

"The truth of the matter is that a priest has the duty to participate in activities aimed at changing unjust social and economic conditions, and that duty comes from the Gospel; it is an action stemming from Christian faith," Bishop Bogarin stated.

"Therefore, they cannot be accused in involvement in factional politics; what these priests are doing is promoting social action for salvation, for liberation from selfishness, misery and injustice."

## Bolivia:

### No Politics for Church, LaPaz Bishop Declares

(NC News Service)

La Paz, Bolivia — The Catholic Church in Bolivia has no political aims and the bishops are neither supporting nor opposing the regime of President Alfredo Ovando, Archbishop Jorge Manrique of La Paz stressed here.

His statement came the day after Clemente Cardinal Maurer of Sucre had said that the "bishops have not endorsed the government," and was aimed at forestalling attempts by opposition groups to use the cardinal's statement to involve the Church in their quarrel with Gen. Ovando's regime.

In the Catholic daily, *Presecla*, Archbishop Manrique said: "The cardinal was correct in telling the press . . . that the bishops' meeting in Cochabamba (December 1969) did not vote in favor of or against the revolutionary government of Gen. Alfredo Ovando, precisely because the conference has no political aims but addresses itself only to religious and pastoral matters."

"In fact," Archbishop Manrique said, "the Church's history in Bolivia shows that no bishops' conference has taken any position of endorsement or rejection regarding the successive governments."

Observers believe that Archbishop Manrique is seeking to discourage those who would like to see a Church endorsement of the country's present rulers.

In giving guarded support to some of the social reform moves of the military government of Ovando, Bolivian Church leaders still press "for true participation of the people" in improving conditions in the country.

In December, the social studies division of the Bolivian Bishops' Conference expressed guarded approval of some of the social reform moves initiated by Ovando and his cabinet, but warned that these needed "the true participation of the Bolivian people" in order to be successful.

Among the measures decreed by the regime were the end of harsh security laws, the end of some anti-union aspects of the labor code and the improvement of social benefits for miners. Another measure, the nationalization of oil resources and drilling facilities, has Bolivians sharply divided.

Leading nationalistic Catholics would like the bishops to endorse the nationalization of the Bolivian Gulf Oil Corporation.

## Pope Tells Nuns

### Don't Be Ridiculous Caricatures

Vatican City — (RNS) — A group of 500 mother superiors were told here by Pope Paul that nuns, like other religious, are facing the "terrible dilemma of being totally uncompromising" in their dress or becoming "ridiculous caricatures."

The Pope advised the senior nuns, according to Italian radio reports, to steer clear of fashions and "not

to give in to the modern mentality" in dress.

Sources here said the pontiff may have been referring to some nuns, particularly in America, who wear normal dress, use makeup, and join fully in modern life.

The mother superiors were meeting at the Vatican to discuss ways of modernizing their orders as outlined in Vatican II directives.

The Pope encouraged the assembled nuns to go ahead with their modernization, but he warned that if "winds of dissatisfaction cause you to yield to the modern mentality, to follow ephemeral and changeable fashions and attitudes, to camouflage yourselves with trappings of the world without discernment or judgment, the result would be truly deplorable."

## Human Treatment Urged for Prisoners Held by N. Vietnam

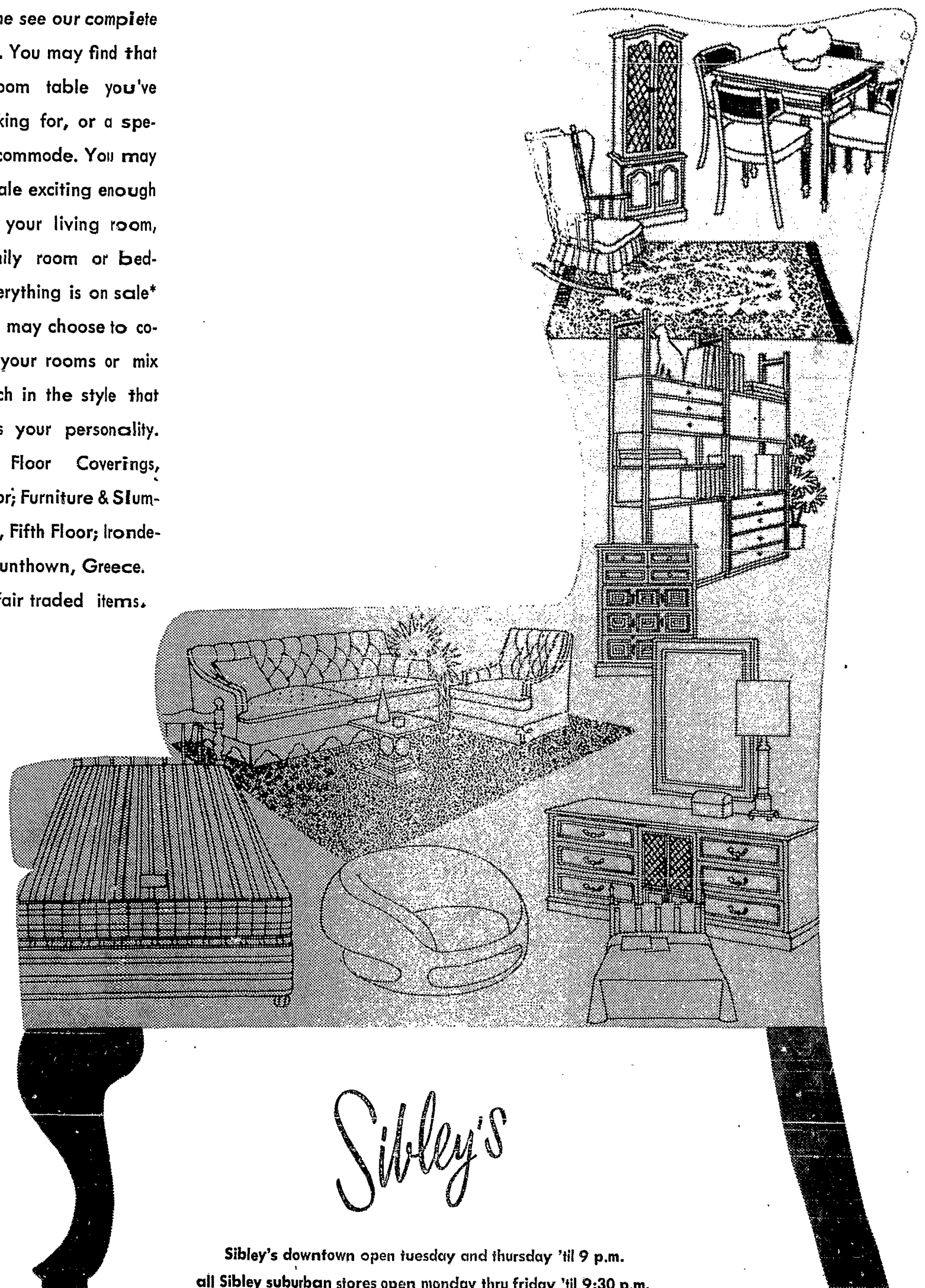
Burlington, Vt. — (RNS) — The diocesan council of the Episcopal Diocese of Vermont has urged Episcopalians to demand more humane treatment for military prisoners in North Vietnam.

They were asked to write to North Vietnamese officials, members of the United States Congress and the Executive Department to bring constructive pressure on the Hanoi government.

(The American Red Cross recently urged a letter-writing campaign to the president of North Vietnam in Hanoi to press for humane prisoner treatment. The campaign has been endorsed by the *Courier-Journal*.)

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